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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [redacted]

INFORMATION REPORT

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CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY Thailand

DATE DISTR. 30 AUG 50

SUBJECT Opinion of Chinese Merchants in Bangkok Concerning Communist Infiltration and Eventual Control of Thailand

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1. Members of Chinese merchant associations in Bangkok believe that Thailand is dangerously exposed to Communist infiltration and that the Communists may eventually control the country. They state that Thailand escaped a loser's fate after World War II through the activities of the wartime Free Thai organization and that profiting from this lesson, Thailand must act with restraint in combatting or neutralizing foreign activities in the country. In particular, Thailand must be cautious in suppressing or containing the policies and activities of the four Great Powers, especially if these activities remain within the national law.

2. These merchants foresee a large exodus of Chinese from China, prompted by starvation and hardship, into relatively rich and undeveloped Thailand. Before these immigrants have become established, they can be easily influenced by any authority. Upon their arrival in Thailand, the local Chinese Communist organization renders what assistance it can in arranging employment for the immigrants and in general lending aid to improve their living conditions. In this way, the Chinese Communist Party builds up a popular following in a short while. The Chinese merchants believe the initiative of the Chinese Communists will prove this technique to be most effective.

3. Before striking, the Communists will wait until their forces are overwhelmingly superior to restraining power or until they are supported by disturbed conditions in the country. In the meantime, they will exercise strict control over themselves and their followers so that the breaking of local laws could not give Thai Government authorities an excuse to suppress the Communist Party. This period will be used in building up their various associations and in collecting intelligence.

4. A frequently used local device for spreading Communist doctrine is to disguise an agent as a food vendor or seller of cosmetics in order to reach the poorer Chinese sections of the city. Once the peddler has attracted a small group of interested buyers, he then expounds the current Communist propaganda line. More important Communist officials have posed as food and coffee vendors to penetrate the various government ministries and offices in an effort to collect information.

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